

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

EA Number: OR128-02-18

BLM Coos Bay District Office

Lease/Serial/Case file No: N/A

Proposed Action Title/Type: Cultural Resource Evaluation of New River ACEC.

Location of Proposed Action: T. 29 S., R. 15 W., Sections 35 and 36. T. 30 S., R. 15 W., Sections 2, 10, 11, 15, 22, 28 and 33. T. 31 S., R. 15 W., Section 8, W.M. Coos and Curry Counties, Oregon.

Applicant (if any): N/A

Conformance With Applicable Land Use Plan: This proposed action is subject to the *Coos Bay District Resource Management Plan & Environmental Impact Statement* and its Record of Decision (BLM, 1995); which is in conformance with the *Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement on Management of Habitat for Late Successional and Old Growth Forest Related Species Within the Range of the Northern Spotted Owl* and its Record of Decision (Interagency, 1994). This plan has been reviewed to determine if the proposed action conforms with the land use plan's terms and conditions as required by 43 CFR 1601.5.

Remarks: The Proposed Action is in compliance with the *Coos Bay District Resource Management Plan & Environmental Impact Statement* and its Record of Decision (BLM, 1995)(RMP); hereby incorporated by reference. The RMP has been determined to be consistent with the standards and guidelines for healthy lands at the land use plan scale and associated timelines.

Need for Proposed Action: The New River ACEC was designated, in part, for the presence of cultural and historical values. The *Final New River ACEC Management Plan* (BLM, 1995) (PLAN) identifies one goal and two objectives which relate directly to cultural resources management:

- Goal 2 - Protect significant cultural sites from human disturbance or destruction. (Page vi)
- Obj. 3 - Protect and interpret important cultural and archaeological sites at New River, and
- Obj. 8 - Facilitate improved management of the New River area through monitoring and research to learn more about the natural and cultural resources of the area. (Page vii)

The PLAN indicates that this goal and these objectives are to be met by development of a Cultural Management Plan. This Cultural Management Plan first will:

- identify areas that have not been systematically inventoried and conduct field investigations, and
- establish a baseline map of distribution of cultural resources to assist monitoring of conditions. (Page 3-17)

Following these investigations, the Cultural Management Plan will develop a regional research design to identify important questions concerning prehistoric occupation of New River, and define BLM and tribal roles and relationships at New River. (Page 3-17)

The PLAN specifies that site evaluation, interpretation and cultural preservation activities will be coordinated with "interested indian tribes." (Page 3-17) The proposed work covered by this document is being planned in close cooperation with the Coquille Indian Tribe, who will supply the PI (principal investigator) and field crew members.

Description of Proposed Action: Evaluation of cultural resources on the New River ACEC. The first step in this process involves pedestrian survey of appropriate areas in the ACEC for cultural resource localities by up to 6 people at one time. Survey may include minor ground disturbance (probing, using a small trowel) to ascertain the nature of sediments and approximate depth of cultural material. Any probe holes created during this operation will be refilled.

Once suitable cultural resource locations are identified and their locations mapped, test excavations may be conducted. This testing will involve excavation of site areas to a depth below recovered cultural material. Once the test excavations are completed, these areas will be returned to as natural an appearance as possible. This includes removal of stakes and string used during the excavations and refilling of the sediments. Small permanent location markers may be implanted to assure return to the location will be possible.

Environmental Impacts to Critical Elements of the Human Environment:

<u>Critical Elements</u>	<u>Affected</u>		<u>Critical Elements</u>	<u>Affected</u>	
	Yes	No		Yes	No
Air Quality	—	<u>X</u>	T & E Species	—	<u>X</u>
ACECs	<u>X</u>	—	Wastes, Hazardous/Solid	—	<u>X</u>
Cultural Resources	<u>X</u>	—	Water Quality	—	<u>X</u>
Farmlands, Prime/Unique	—	<u>X</u>	Wetlands/Riparian Zones/ACS	—	<u>X</u>
Floodplains	—	<u>X</u>	Wild & Scenic Rivers	—	<u>X</u>
Unresolved conflicts	—	<u>X</u>	Wilderness	—	<u>X</u>
Noxious Weed Management	—	<u>X</u>	Port Orford Cedar Management	—	<u>X</u>
Environmental Justice Concerns	—	<u>X</u>	Energy production, transmission	—	<u>X</u>
Native American religious concerns and/or					
Indian trust resources	<u>X</u>	—			

Description of Impacts to Specific Elements of the Human Environment: None

Description of Mitigation Measures and Residual Impacts: None

Persons/Agencies Consulted: None

Preparer(s):

	<u>Initials</u>	<u>Date</u>
Stephan R. Samuels - Archeologist and Native American Coordinator (Team Lead)	_____	_____
Timothy Barnes, RPG - Geologist	_____	_____
Nancy Brian, Botanist	_____	_____
Chris Church, ACEC manager	_____	_____
Stephen Langenstein, Wildlife Biologist	_____	_____
Scott Lightcap, Fisheries Biologist	_____	_____
Tim Votaw, Hazardous Material Specialist	_____	_____

Date: July 15, 2002

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT/DECISION RECORD.

I have reviewed this environmental assessment including the explanation and resolution of any potentially significant environmental impacts. I have determined that the proposed action with the mitigation measures described below will not have any significant impacts on the human environment and that an EIS is not required.. I have determined that the proposed project is in conformance with the approved land use plan. It is my decision to implement the project as described in the Description of the Proposed Action section with the mitigation measures identified below.

Mitigation Measures:

Decision recommended by: NRSA:_____ Date:_____

NRSA:_____ Date:_____

NRSA:_____ Date:_____

Decision Approved by: Myrtlewood Field Manager:_____ Date:_____